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Claims

1. A solvent cleaning process of cleaning a non-aqueous solvent used in a dry cleaning process for fabrics, the dry cleaning process comprising consecutive wash cycles for washing respective fabrics batches, the solvent cleaning process comprising:
- 5 (a) a basic solvent refining cycle; and
(b) a first advanced solvent refining cycle;
- said basic solvent refining cycle comprising a step of separating solvent into:
- 10 (i) a first solvent fraction; and
(ii) a second solvent fraction which is less clean than the first fraction;
- wherein the basic and first advanced solvent refining cycles are independently effected when solvent to be cleaned fulfils a respective predetermined condition.
- 15 2. A solvent cleaning process according to claim 1, wherein the basic solvent refining cycle is used to clean solvent from a wash cycle when that solvent fulfils a first predetermined condition.
- 20 3. A solvent process according to either preceding claim, wherein the average volume ratio of the first solvent fraction to the second solvent fraction is from 1:1 to 99:1, preferably from 7:3 to 99:1 and most preferably from 9:1 to 99:1.
- 25 4. A solvent process according to any preceding claim, wherein the basic solvent refining cycle is effected using a filtration system, preferably a microfiltration membrane system, most preferably a cross-flow microfiltration membrane system and preferably any microfiltration membrane system has a trans-membrane pressure greater than 0.5 bar, more preferably greater than 2 bar but preferably less than 10 bar.
- 30 5. A solvent cleaning process according to claim 4, wherein the filtration system comprises a cross-flow membrane having a channel diameter greater than 1mm, preferably greater than 2mm and most preferably greater than 5mm but preferably less than 25mm.

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6. A solvent cleaning process according to any preceding claim, wherein the first advanced solvent refining cycle is used to clean the second fraction when the second fraction fulfils a second predetermined condition.
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7. A solvent cleaning process according to any preceding claim, wherein the first advanced cleaning cycle employs first replenishable means to be replenished when its cleaning ability falls below a first predetermined threshold.
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8. A solvent cleaning process according to any preceding claim, wherein the first advanced cleaning cycle comprises an evaporation step.
9. A solvent cleaning process according to any preceding claim, wherein the first solvent fraction is cleaned with a second advanced solvent refining cycle when the first solvent fraction fulfils a third predetermined condition.
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10. A solvent cleaning process according to claim 9, wherein the second advanced cleaning cycle employs second replenishable means to be replenished when its cleaning ability falls below a second predetermined threshold.
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11. A solvent cleaning process according to claim 9 or claim 10, wherein the second advanced cleaning cycle comprises contacting the first solvent fraction with a solid absorption medium.
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12. A solvent cleaning process according to claim 10 or claim 11 when dependent upon claim 7, wherein the second replenishable means comprises a replaceable cartridge containing the solid absorption medium.
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13. A solvent cleaning process according to claim 12, wherein the second replenishable means is replaced after more than 10, preferably more than 25 and most preferably more than 50 wash cycles.
14. A solvent cleaning process according to any preceding claim, wher in any predetermined condition is selected from colour, chemical composition, solids

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content, turbidity, dielectric constant, viscosity, odour and the elapsing of a predetermined number of wash cycles.

15 A solvent cleaning process according to claim 14, wherein a predetermined
5 condition is chemical composition and comprises water content.

16. A solvent cleaning process according to any preceding claim, wherein the basic solvent refining cycle comprises a filtration step.

10 17. A solvent cleaning unit for a non-aqueous solvent dry cleaning apparatus, the
unit comprising

(a) **basic solvent refining means; and**

(b) first advanced solvent refining means;

15 said basic solvent refining cycle means comprising means for separating
 solvent into:

(i) a first solvent fraction; and

(ii) a second solvent fraction;

the unit further comprising control means for independently causing the basic and first advanced solvent refining cycles to be effected when solvent to be cleaned fulfils a respective predetermined condition.

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